

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument comprising:
circuitry to control a function of the instrument;
a control operable by a user to operate the circuitry; and
a light source to illuminate the control.
2. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 1, wherein the instrument comprises a camera.
3. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 1, wherein the instrument comprises a shaver.
4. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 1, wherein the light source is separate from the control within the instrument, such that the control is positioned in a visual path between the light source and a user of the instrument.
5. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 4, wherein the control is substantially translucent.
6. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 4, wherein the light source comprises a light-emitting diode.
7. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 1, further comprising a light pipe to convey light from the light source to the control.

8. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 7, wherein the control is substantially opaque except for a function indicator of said control, and wherein the light pipe to conveys light from the light source to the function indicator.

9. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 1, wherein the light source is integral with the control, such that the control is self-illuminating.

10. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 9, wherein the light source comprises a phosphorescent substance.

11. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 10, wherein the phosphorescent substance is integrated within a material of which the control is formed.

12. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 11, wherein the material of which the control is formed comprises silicone.

13. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument comprising:

 circuitry to control functionality of the instrument;

 a keypad including a plurality of keys operable by a user to operate the circuitry;

and

 illumination means for illuminating the keys.

14. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 13, wherein the endoscopic surgical instrument comprises a camera.

15. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 13, wherein the endoscopic surgical instrument comprises a shaver.

16. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 13, wherein the keys are substantially translucent, and wherein the illumination means comprises a light-emitting diode.

17. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 13, wherein the illumination means comprises:

a light source separate from the keypad; and

a light pipe to convey light from the light source to the keys.

18. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 17, wherein the keys are substantially opaque except for a function indicator on each of the keys, and wherein the light pipe conveys light from the light source to the function indicator on each of the keys.

19. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 13, wherein the illumination means is separate from the keys.

20. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 13, wherein the illumination means is integral with the keys, such that the keys are self-illuminating.

21. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 20, wherein the illumination means comprises a phosphorescent substance.

22. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 21, wherein the phosphorescent substance is integrated within a material of which the keys are formed.

23. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 22, wherein the material of which the keys are formed comprises silicone.

24. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument comprising:

- a housing;

- a circuit board;

- circuitry to control functions associated with the instrument, the circuitry including a plurality of switch contacts on the circuit board;

- a keypad mounted to the housing and including a plurality of keys operable by a user, to actuate the plurality of switch contacts; and

- a light source to illuminate the keypad.

25. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, wherein the endoscopic surgical instrument comprises a camera.

26. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, wherein the endoscopic surgical instrument comprises a shaver.

27. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, wherein the keys are substantially translucent, and wherein the light source is mounted between the circuit board and the keypad.

28. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 27, wherein the light source is coupled to the circuit board.
29. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, wherein the light source comprises a light-emitting diode.
30. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, further comprising a light pipe to convey light from the light source to at least one of the keys.
31. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 30, wherein said at least one of the keys is substantially opaque except for a function indicator of said key, and wherein the light pipe conveys light from the light source to the function indicator.
32. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, wherein the light source is separate from the keypad.
33. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 24, wherein the light source is integral with the keypad, such that the keypad is self-illuminating.
34. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 33, wherein the light source comprises a phosphorescent substance.
35. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 34, wherein the phosphorescent substance is integrated within a material of which the keys are formed.
36. A hand-held endoscopic surgical instrument as recited in claim 35, wherein the material of which the keys are formed comprises silicone.